

If I could take as an example Monmouth Medical Center, which is in my hometown of Long Branch, which we did visit, and where I talked with the president of the hospital and some of the hospital executives about the problems that they would face with these levels of Medicare cuts, they estimated that at Monmouth Medical Center, which is the largest area hospital in my district, that the Monmouth Medical Center would lose an estimated \$77 million in Medicare payments over the next 7 years under this Republican proposal.

Interestingly enough, Monmouth Medical Center receives 55.17 percent, or a majority of its revenues, from Medicare and Medicaid. That figure is pretty much repeated for a lot of the other hospitals in my district. Jersey Shore Medical Center, which some people know recently had to lay off a lot of personnel, 56.29 percent of its revenues are from those two programs; Riverview in Red Bank, 51 percent; John F. Kennedy Medical Center in Edison, 59 percent; South Amboy Medical Center, also in my district, 57 percent.

Although the Republican congressional leadership has been vague about the specifics of their Medical proposal, it is inevitable that reductions in hospital spending will have to be a big part of this Medicare reduction package. The effects of these cuts will be felt throughout the community and force many hospitals to make some really tough choices. I think that we are going to see increasingly hospitals laying off staff, that is already happening to a lot of them, and many of the community benefits that hospitals now offer, such as multiple health screening centers, transportation services, and some of the clinics that are so important to a lot of people in my district and around the country would probably end up closing.

The reductions in Medicare spending that are being proposed by the Republican majority did not cover the additional costs of program enrollment growth plus inflation, so in other words, what we are doing here is we are not anticipating that a lot more seniors will be entering into the Medicare program and taking advantage of it when we estimate what these costs are going to mean.

I have a lot of other information, and I do not want to repeat it all. The bottom line is that increased Medicare admissions are a substantial part of the revenue that a lot of New Jersey hospitals receive, and we estimate through the hospital association, again, the New Jersey Hospital Association, that there are about 76 hospitals that would be on the critical list, in other words, either face closures or face significant downsizing if this Republican Medicare reduction takes effect.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to just mention a couple more things in a larger sense before I conclude today. Then I am going to yield some time to my friend, the gentleman from American

Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] who I think would like to use some of the time that I have remaining.

I cannot help, in discussing Medicare and the proposals that the Republican majority have put forward, not only with Medicare but also with Medicaid, the health care program for the poor, but think about what the situation was like in this House a year ago when the President had put forward a proposal for universal health coverage, and whether or not we liked President Clinton's proposals, and I frankly did, but whether or not you did or you did not, the focus of the debate in this House was on universal coverage, or at least trying to achieve an increase in the number of Americans that were covered by health insurance, rather than a reduction.

We talked then, a year ago, about the fact that there were something like 30 million to 40 million Americans that had no health insurance coverage. The bottom line is if we look at the statistics, that figure has only gotten worse since that time a year ago. A year ago we had fewer people that were uninsured, and we had the hope that we were going to try through some mechanism to cover if not all of them, then a significant portion of them.

Now one year later we face a situation where significantly more Americans, we estimate something like 43 to 44 million Americans, have no health insurance, yet, the focus in this House is on cutting back on the Medicare program for the elderly and the Medicaid program for the poor, which I would suggest ultimately is going to result in even more people entering the rolls of the uninsured.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to, if I could, just quote some excerpts from a recent editorial that was in the *Star Ledger* on September 3, which is the major, the largest daily circulation newspaper in the State of New Jersey. It says: "Last year at this time it was not just the major policy issue," talking about health care reform under discussion, "but almost the only one. This year, for all practical purposes, it", the health care reform agenda:

Does not exist. Despite the intensity of today's political debate, it plays no part in the dialogue.

One would think the problem of bringing health care coverage to the uninsured had disappeared, or miraculously been solved, except it has not. Things are worse. Last summer when President Clinton unsuccessfully pressed Congress to enact a system to provide universal health care coverage, estimates of the number of people without insurance ranged from 37 million to 39 million. This summer, with the fight for health care reform only a memory, the number of uninsured has increased. Estimates now range as high as 43.4 million. This means that one of six Americans is without coverage, and that does not take into account those who are underinsured and those who are paying scandalously high individual rates for their insurance. The number of uninsured will continue to grow rapidly.

The Clinton administration claims that Republican plans to cut projected spending

on Medicaid, the Federal-state program of health insurance for the poor, over 7 years could deprive nine million more people of coverage. The big mistake that both parties are making now is to ignore the larger need for a universal health care plan. The debate may have gone away but the problem is as acute as ever. Polls still show universal coverage to be a concept that has wide support.

I think it is very sad that we are going to spend the next month here talking about how to cut back on the Medicare and the Medicaid program at a time when the number of uninsured continues to grow. What I hoped, and I hope that some day we will see it, is that the debate on Medicare reform would focus on what we could do to expand Medicare in a way that made the quality of health care better, and emphasized preventative care, and also saved money.

Those of us who have been concerned about Medicare for a number of years in this House, many of us on both sides of the aisles have talked about, in the past have talked about expanding Medicare to include prevention measures such as prescription drugs or home health care. We know and studies have shown if you emphasize those prevention measures and you include prescription drugs or home health care and long-term care in the Medicare program, that prevents senior citizens from having to go to a hospital, being institutionalized in a nursing home, or whatever, and ultimately saves the Federal Government billions of dollars in costs for that institutionalized care.

But instead of moving in that direction, looking for a Medicare reform proposal that would actually expand Medicare, emphasize prevention, and ultimately save money without negatively impacting seniors' health care, we are just talking about this budget-driven proposal by the Republican leadership that would slash Medicare by \$270 billion and I believe ultimately gut the Medicare program and significantly decrease the quality of health care for America's seniors.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I would like to yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from American Samoa.

PROTESTING FRENCH NUCLEAR TESTING IN THE PACIFIC

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA] is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from New Jersey for yielding me this time and I really appreciate his consideration for allowing me to share with my colleagues and the American people what is happening in French Polynesia, the eve of the French nuclear testing catastrophe that I feel that what is happening now.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday France detonated a nuclear bomb in French Polynesia, defying worldwide opinion which

has uniformly condemned their resumption of nuclear testing. Mr. Speaker, about 2 hours ago, I personally received word from Tahiti's most prominent leader against nuclear testing, the mayor of the village of Take Ah Ah, Mr. Temaru.

My colleagues, as I speak, Tahiti is burning right now. Tahiti is at a standstill. The only airport in Tahiti is burning. As a result of France's explosion of the nuclear bomb in Mururoa Atoll right now, Tahitians attempted to hold a peaceful demonstration and occupy the only airport on the island. As a result, a French military hurled grenades and starting shooting at these unarmed Tahitians.

Mr. Speaker, what arrogance. Several Tahitians are wounded and Mr. Temaru is making an appeal to the world community of what is happening because the French Government right now is making every attempt to suppress what is happening right now on this island in French Polynesia.

Mr. Speaker, there are several good reasons why France should not, does not need to explode eight more nuclear bombs under the atoll, Mururoa Atoll. First, France has already exploded 163 nuclear bombs in the atmosphere on and under the Mururoa Atoll. The nuclear contamination under this atoll is equivalent to several times the contamination of the city of Chernobyl in Russia. And let me share with my colleagues and the American people what the atoll looks like, Mr. Speaker, if I can get a focus on this. And this is what the atoll looks like. This is a French document showing the areas of the atoll that is contaminated. And despite all this publicity that some of the people have seen, the President of French Polynesia swimming on the beach, it is a total misinformation given to the world community, and the fact is this atoll is contaminated, Mr. Speaker. And it could be 10 years from now, 50 years from now, if this atoll starts leaking nuclear contamination, the people of the Pacific are going to be the victims while Mr. Chirac continues to drink his wine in Paris.

Mr. Speaker, France currently has the third largest supply of nuclear bombs in the world. Nuclear bombs are weapons of genocide, Mr. Speaker. Nuclear bombs destroy everything and anything on sight, including human beings. Mr. Speaker, who are the French going to explode these bombs against?

The fact that Europe is united, we have a NATO organization. And the fact that Chirac says that this is in the national interest of France's nuclear deterrent force system, what about our friends in Germany? Should they then also be concerned that this is the kind of thing that France is opening up a complete can of worms. What is there for us then to tell Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan, that they have no right to conduct nuclear testing for their national interest? What hypocrisy, Mr. Speaker, what hypocrisy.

Mr. Speaker, after exploding over 1,000 nuclear bombs, the United States, who happens to be an ally of France, has already offered the technology for which France seeks to achieve by exploding 8 more nuclear bombs. Each nuclear bomb with a force of up to 10 times, 10 times more powerful than the nuclear bomb that we dropped on Hiroshima 50 years ago. And that bomb, Mr. Speaker, incidentally, killed 120,000 men, women, and children in that city with an additional 80,000 people who died as a result of radioactive contamination and illnesses.

Mr. Speaker, three major newspapers and several others in the United States, the New York Times, the Washington Post, and the Los Angeles Times, all called for President Chirac to stop the nuclear tests in the South Pacific. The U.S. Senate has also passed a resolution under the leadership of U.S. Senator DANIEL AKAKA of Hawaii that calls upon the Government of France not to conduct these tests. In the House of Representatives, the Committee on International Relations unanimously adopted a resolution again calling upon the Government of France not to conduct these nuclear testings. Mr. Speaker, President Clinton has also issued a strong statement last month to call upon all nations, especially France and China, for a complete ban on termination or termination of nuclear bomb testings.

Mr. Speaker, the United States alone has enough nuclear bombs to blow this whole planet 10 times over. The notion that the nation with more nuclear bombs will win the next nuclear war is sheer nonsense and total madness of what this world is doing now. Mr. Speaker, if France does not set a good example by canceling nuclear bomb tests, what is there to stop countries like Iran and Iraq and Pakistan and India to also conduct nuclear bomb tests and also either purchase or develop their own nuclear arsenals? What madness, Mr. Speaker. When is this madness going to end?

I personally visited Mururoa Atoll 3 years ago, Mr. Speaker, and I must say in all candor, the military officials of France personally told me that that atoll is contaminated. The atoll is contaminated. Mr. Speaker, in appealing to the people of French Polynesia and to the leaders of French Polynesia, who are in constant contact with Mr. Chirac, one day the children of the Pacific and their children's children are either going to live as a free people or as victims of nuclear contamination from the Pacific Ocean which has served our Polynesian people for centuries as a highway system and also the source of all forms of life where man, the animals, and plants have co-existed.

Mr. Speaker, this is truly a sad commentary to make in a democratic country like France to totally disregard the sincere concerns of some 27 million men, women, and children who live in the Pacific who have no hatred

or animosity toward the people of France. The people of the Pacific only want to live without fear of nuclear contamination in their vast ocean of the marine environment. Is this asking too much of President Chirac who, maybe 10 or 50 years from now, when we are going to be all gone but our children's children will then ask how can the Government of France allow such nuclear contamination to happen?

Mr. Speaker, I am reminded of what a great western leader once said. He may have even been a French philosopher, for all I know. But he said the only real reason why evil continues to exist in this world is because good men do nothing. And I call upon President Clinton and the State Department, this is the French Government that decided years ago, this is the very government that decided years ago to withdraw its membership from NATO. This is the same French Government that demanded that all United States forces leave France within 60 days. And as I recall history, Mr. Speaker, our President, through Secretary of State Dean Rusk, personally hand-carried a letter and to let President De Gaulle know in verbatim that also included the 10,000 bodies of Americans who are buried in France who were there to fight, to liberate France from Nazi Germany.

Mr. Speaker, this is the same French Government which 50 years ago by forced deportation of 75,000 French citizens to Nazi concentration camps and as a result only 1,000 of those French citizens survived. What a shame, Mr. Speaker, what a shame. And this is the same French Government who looks upon the 200,000 people who live in French Polynesia and say yes, they are expendable. They are expendable because Paris is 15,000 miles away. The people of France have no concern whatsoever about the leakages of the nuclear contamination. The 200,000 men, women, and children who live in French Polynesia, Mr. Speaker, are deemed expendable by the Chirac government's policy to continue these nuclear bomb explosions, which is madness.

Mr. Speaker, President Chirac drinks his wine. The island of Tahiti is burning right now, at this moment. The total, the whole island is at a standstill. There are blockades now taken at the airport. The airport is burning. As I said, Mr. Speaker, it is just a beginning.

What arrogance, Mr. Speaker. What arrogance on the part of a democratic country like France. It is the best form of true colonialism in its worst example, and I cannot believe that here a democracy of the world is setting the worst example to the rest of the world. When we talk about human rights, when we talk about liberty, when we talk about freedom and these people are suffering and are victims because of this stupid and asinine policy of the French Government to explode nuclear bombs in the Pacific. And the leaders of the world, the community, the world

said if it is so safe, Mr. Chirac, why do you not explode it in France?

We do not need this madness. We do not need this nightmare. I might also, Mr. Speaker, there are only 1.2 million American citizens living in the State of Hawaii. On the State of Hawaii, these are American citizens, Mr. Speaker, and I appeal again to the President, to the State Department, let us not be submissive. Let us not be passive to allow President Chirac to make these kinds of decisions that bring tension, that bring trouble and complete disregard for the concerns and the lives and the health and the welfare of the people who live in the Pacific.

Mr. Speaker, I was in Tahiti just 2 days ago. Never have I witnessed what colonialism really means in the eve of the 21st century. Tahitian people are the least educated. I learned that only a handful, this is after 150 years of French colonialism, I was told by the Tahitians there are less than 10 Tahitians that were ever educated in the field of law. What a shame. What a shame, Mr. Speaker.

I was joined by the Minister of Finance. The Minister of Finance, Mr. Takemura of Japan, quotes that France is losing respect from nations all over the world because of this stupid policy of exploding nuclear bombs in the Pacific. I might also note, Mr. Speaker, that there were parliamentarians from about 20 countries all over the world who were there to lend their support in strong opposition to this stupid policy that President Chirac has established to continue these stupid nuclear tests that we do not need in this world. And why are we reinventing the wheel? We have the technology. We offered it to President Chirac. But he does not want to accept it. What foolishness. And if it is so much to say that President Chirac can get away with this, then, Mr. Speaker, there is no justification for the United States and for France to tell India, to tell Pakistan, to tell Iraq, to tell Iran, you cannot experiment with nuclear bombs. That is nonsense and I urge my colleagues, I urge the American people to help, to help the 200,000 Polynesian Tahitians who are the victims.

I might also add, Mr. Speaker, the media has done a disservice to this whole issue of nuclear bomb testings seeking only the opinions of people living in Europe, seeking only the opinions of policymakers but never looking at the situation of the victims, the people, the indigenous people who live in these islands, never, never regarding their concerns and their needs to live. And that is all they want, Mr. Speaker.

They just want to simply live as a people whose lives depend on the ocean, whose lives depend on these atolls and these islands, and I just cannot believe this, Mr. Speaker. I cannot believe this is at the eve of the 21st century we have a country like France, supposedly a democracy, practicing the worst evils of colonialism against these 200,000 people that live there and all they

want in life is just to live in peace. Is that asking too much of President Chirac? Oh, no. President Chirac wants to so that he is a big man now.

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He is macho; he is De Gaulle the second. He wants to show that he has got muscle there.

I hope Chancellor Kohl will take notice of this fact. If I were a German citizen, I would be a little concerned about President Chirac's ability to press that nuclear button.

Why should Germany also not have nuclear deterrent force? I say, in every justification, Germany should have that same, but this is a farce that is going on as far as nuclear testing is concerned.

Why should France be the only one? And other democratic countries in Europe, they should also have the same technology. This is what France has done.

Chirac is the leading proponent of nuclear proliferation. What France has done yesterday, it has opened up the nuclear arms tests again, and I call upon President Clinton and Secretary Christopher, let us not be passive about this. This thing concerns the lives and the welfare of the American people just as much as the poor victims who are caught between this whole episode on how one man, not the goodness of the French people, one man and the terrible policy that his government has established since he has been in office for the first 100 days. I cannot believe this, Mr. Speaker; the worst example of colonialism on the eve of the 21st century that we find a democratic country like France totally disregarding world opinion, totally disregarding the wishes of the local people who are going to be most impacted. Yet this man still went ahead and exploded that nuclear bomb yesterday. I cannot believe this, Mr. Speaker.

I ask the American people, you know, there is one thing I have learned about American tradition. Mr. Speaker, they always like to support the underdog because we were the underdogs when we were colonies and happened to be going against the greatest power, that happened to be the British empire. Who would dare challenge the British empire for its form of colonialism? This exactly is the situation facing the Polynesians, 200,000 people who do not have guns, grenades. They are still paddling canoes to make a living, enjoying what nature has given them, enjoying what God has given them.

Is it asking so much that these people want to live as any others, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Speaker, what nonsense, what madness that the President of France has the gall, the mitigated gall, to press that nuclear button yesterday.

If the Tahitians get killed and wounded, if that place is burning, I say this should be on the head of President Chirac, that he should be taking full responsibility for this.

I call upon my colleagues and the goodness of the American people, do

not buy French products, do not buy French perfume, do not buy French wines. Send a strong message to President Chirac that the world community and the American people support the victims of this whole thing, and this is the only way that that man is going to listen to the wishes of the world community.

Mr. Speaker, 63 percent of the people of France do not support nuclear testing. The vast majority of the Tahitian Polynesians, 200,000 men, women, and children who live in this area of the world, do not support nuclear testing.

Yet because of the strong military lobby, the corporate lobby in France that probably supported President Chirac during his campaign, is getting a payoff. That is what this is about. The corporate lobby in France is getting a payoff because of its support of President Chirac in his election campaign this year. What a shame, Mr. Speaker. What a shame this is the kind of policy the President of France adheres to despite the wishes not only of the people, the victims who live in these islands; they are getting nothing but the worst example of colonialism in the middle of the 20th century.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I appeal to my colleagues and the American people, do not buy French foods, do not buy French products. This is the only way that President Chirac is going to listen to common sense, listen and be a little more sensitive to the wishes of the people who live there.

Mr. Speaker, again I thank my friend, the gentleman from New Jersey.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. RIGGS (at the request of Mr. ARMEY), for today, on account of personal reasons.

Mr. SISISKY (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today, and the balance of the week, on account of medical reasons.

Mr. TUCKER (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today, and the balance of the week, on account of official business.

Mr. MFUME (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today, on account of district business.

Mr. PETE GEREN of Texas (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT), for today, on account of family medical emergency.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. BRYANT of Texas) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BRYANT of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. SCHROEDER, for 5 minutes, today.